IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 2, 11 and 18 without prejudice and amend the claims as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) A silica microstructure fabrication method comprising the steps of:

C2

depositing an etch stop layer formed of one of gold, platinum, and alumina on an etching area of a portion of a first silica layer formed on a semiconductor substrate;

forming a second silica layer on the surfaces of the etch stop layer and the first silica layer;

forming a mask patterned according to the shape of the etching area on the surface of the second silica layer;

removing the second silica layer from the etching area using the mask by dry etching; and

removing the etch stop layer by wet etching.

10. (Twice Amended) A silica microstructure which is produced by the steps of:

C3

depositing an etch stop layer formed of one of gold, platinum, and alumina on an etching area of a portion of a first silica layer formed on a semiconductor substrate;

forming a second silica layer on the surfaces of the etch stop layer and the first silica layer;

forming a mask patterned according to the shape of the etching area on the surface of the second silica layer;

1. (Twice Amended) A silica microstructure fabrication method comprising the steps of:

depositing an etch stop layer formed of one of gold, platinum, and alumina on an etching area of a portion of a first silica layer formed on a semiconductor substrate;

forming a second silica layer on the surfaces of the etch stop layer and the first silica layer;

forming a mask patterned according to the shape of the etching area on the surface of the second silica layer;

removing the second silica layer from the etching area using the mask by dry etching; and

removing the etch stop layer by wet etching.

10. (Twice Amended) A silica microstructure which is produced by the steps of:

depositing an etch stop layer formed of one of gold, platinum, and alumina on an etching area of a portion of a first silica layer formed on a semiconductor substrate;

forming a second silica layer on the surfaces of the etch stop layer and the first silica layer;

forming a mask patterned according to the shape of the etching area on the surface of the second silica layer;

removing the second silica layer from the etching area using the mask by dry etching; and

removing the etch stop layer by wet etching.